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customs union and a permanent international commission for Africa.

More important still, from a practical standpoint, is the meeting of the Interparliamentary Peace Conference, which will hold its sessions for three days in the same city immediately after the adjournment of the general peace congress. This Interparliamentary Union is composed of members of parliament only. It was organized in 1889 at Paris, with 100 members. It has held annual meetings since in different capitals of Europe, except in 1893. Its growth has been truly extraordinary, until it now numbers over 1200 members. It is not exaggerating in the least to call it one of the most influential organizations in Europe, though, or better, because its influence is exercised in quiet and indirect ways through the composing groups in the various parliaments.

The meeting of this body at Buda-Pesth next week is expected to be the largest and most important in its history. One hundred and eighteen senators and deputies from Italy alone have signified to the committee on organization their intention to be present. Large delegations are announced, also, from England, Germany and other countries. The Hungarian Parliament has voted \$2500 for the expenses of the conference, and given it the free use of the Senate chamber and committee rooms. The delegates will also be carried free by the government railroads. All this is not mere sentimental courtesy, but is indicative of the deep hold which the movement has taken on Austro-Hungarian statesmen, some of whom have been members of the Union almost from the beginning.

At the conference of the Union last year at Brussels a carefully prepared plan for a permanent tribunal of arbitration was adopted, which is considered by many one of the best schemes of its kind ever proposed. This plan, finely printed, was sent to the governments of all the nations represented in the Union, and to some others. The same subject is to be taken up again this year. The remarkable progress which arbitration has made during the last twelve months in our own country and Great Britain has made a deep impression in Europe, and the fruits of this progress will unquestionably be seen in the deliberations and conclusions of the large number of European statesmen who will take counsel together next week at Buda-Pesth for the relief of Europe from its present unfortunate condition."

#### LITERATURE OF THE CIVIL WAR.\*

The object for which this paper is published will be accomplished only when wars cease and there shall no longer be occasion or desire to write war literature. It seems probable now that literature itself is to be one of the most efficient means of putting an end to that bloody and inhuman system which it has so often upheld and surrounded with a halo of false glory. Recent literature, both fiction and poetry, in books as well as magazines, is rapidly being tinged with the new pacific spirit which is spreading so rapidly throughout the world.

There is no more popular book in Europe than "Die Waffen Nieder," written expressly in opposition to war. Howell's Altruria papers, in this country, are full of the new spirit. One of the finest of our living poets, Ida Whipple Benham, is professedly a poet of peace.

The stream of war literature which poured forth so abundantly and incessantly in the years after the close of the Civil War has not yet entirely ceased, though it is rapidly falling away. Some of the leading magazines now refuse to publish war stories. Men's minds are turning to other things. The increasingly humane spirit of society makes it impossible for imaginations to revel in word pictures of furious battle scenes as they once did. The startling still delights, doubtless always will, but hereafter it must be more and more free from the cruel and merciless. Literature is detecting this change in the spirit of men, and is elevating itself and making itself truer to its own mission by seeking to interpret and express it.

The poem which is before us, "The March to the Sea," just published, is distinctly a poem of this transition period. It is a narrative poem in which the author, who was himself "*quorum pars*," not simply sets forth, but interprets and idealizes, the spirit of the campaign by which General Sherman broke the last hopes of the Southern Confederacy. It does not go much into the details of the march, but confines itself to an expression of its general features, purpose and meaning. It is written in heroic pentameter verse, which frequently falls into the genuine old heroic swing and spirit. The march of this verse is frequently broken by the interspersing of lyrics and ballads which the soldiers are represented as singing or repeating. Thus the real life of camp and march are more vividly and also truly set forth. The incidents of these poems are real facts of the march, but their character is greatly intensified by the lyric power in which they are set forth. "The Raid of the Andrews Men" would be hard to surpass in its kind. "The Ballad of John Brown" is nobly done. Mr. Byers's poetic strength lies largely in this direction, though he has used the epic verse as successfully as any recent poet. The poem has occasional touches of genuine humor, shows a fine feeling of the beauty and sublimity of nature, especially in its large and fixed aspects, and is full of a rare and delicate pathos.

The poem expresses profound appreciation of the service which the great march rendered to the cause of union and liberty, but there is no glorying in war for its own sake. In fact, a vein of sadness runs all through it that such a dire necessity should ever have had to be resorted to. The author in his "Adieu" takes sweet delight in the thought that the war is past, that its awful ravages have begun to disappear, and that a spirit of love and concord is steadily growing between the North and the South, as manifested in the frequently recurring reunions of the blue and the gray.

"Sweet meadows mark the shaded glen  
That war with bullets sowed,  
And roses line the lanes again  
Where Sherman's troopers rode.

In yonder wood where once was heard  
The cannon's deadly hail,  
With softer notes the heart is stirred,  
By some sweet nightingale.

War's wasted fields have grown to green,  
The streams in Sherman's path  
Turn busy wheels, no more the scene  
Of battle's deadly wrath.

And they whose swords were sharp to slay,  
Have felt war's anger cease,  
And busy commerce leads the way  
In paths of love and peace."

\*THE MARCH TO THE SEA. A Poem, Epic and Lyric. By S.H. M. Byers. Boston: The Arena Co. Cloth, \$1.25. Paper, 50 cents.